

1. Paragraph at Page 9, Line 26:

- i. **Delete** the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 21 of the application, which as filed begins with the words “As is depicted in Figure 2,”
- ii. **Replace** the paragraph with the following:

As is depicted in Figure 2, the locking segment **1** of the present invention is optimally constructed to fit within a gasket **2** that is configured to fit within any standard mechanical joint without necessitating changes to the configuration of the bell, gland, or spigot. Gasket **2** is an elastomeric or other resilient or deformable material, such as those in the art will understand may be used in the practice of a mechanical joint. The preferred configuration of the gasket is an annular ring with a radially inner spigot-facing surface **4** that is adapted to be in contact with spigot **10**, a gland-facing surface **7**, which is adapted to be compressed by a gland or compression ring **11**, and a recess-seat facing surface **9** that is adapted to contact the inner surface of bell **12**. Although these surfaces are readily distinguishable in the drawings and as discussed herein, it will be apparent that any gasket intended for use in a mechanical joint will have such surfaces; as the gasket is compressed, it will necessarily be compressed by spigot **10**, recess seat **43**, and gland **11**. Accordingly, even an O-ring with circular cross section would possess all three surfaces, though the transition among surfaces may not be as readily apparent in the uncompressed state as in the configuration shown[.]. Most preferably, gasket **2** conforms to all of the requirements of ANSI/AWWA C111/A21.11-95. In particular, for any given spigot **10**, gasket **2** tends to have a slightly smaller inner diameter than the outer diameter of the spigot **10**. Accordingly, placement of gasket **2** over the exterior of spigot **10** typically will require exertion of force to expand gasket **2** to fit around spigot **10**.

2. Paragraph at Page 11, Line 26:

- i. **Delete** the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 26 of the application, which as filed begins with the words “In a preferred configuration as detailed in Figure 2,”
- ii. **Replace** the paragraph with the following:

In a preferred configuration as detailed in Figure 2, segment **1** in cross section resembles a truncated, preferably asymmetrical, acute triangle, having a toothed edge **16**, with teeth **6** extending therefrom in the arcuate pattern as above discussed; and a back portion 100, which in

the shown embodiment has a lower surface 13, extending radially and axially along a slope toward a gland-meeting area 101, which is shown in the figures as a general region in the vicinity of a rear-elbow 3. Rear-elbow 3 is adapted to be in a close proximity to gland 11 when the mechanical joint is assembled. Radially outwardly of both elbow 3 and toothed edge 16, back portion 100 of segment 1 possesses a recess-seat meeting area 102, shown in the drawings as a region with an upper protrusion 17, which together with elbow 3 defines a back surface 14 thereinbetween, and together with the leading tooth 6 of toothed edge 16, defines a frontal slope 15 thereinbetween. In this embodiment, elbow 3 is in close proximity to gland 11 when the joint is assembled, and upper protrusion 17 is in close proximity to annular gasket recess seat 43 of the bell. Most preferably the point of closest proximity between elbow 3 and facing surface 7 is no further from the juncture of recess-meeting surface 9 and facing surface 7 than one half the length of facing surface 7. Furthermore, the inventor prefers that elbow 3 not be immediately adjacent to the juncture of facing surface 7 and spigot 10. A greater volume of elastomeric material of gasket 2 exists between recess-meeting surface 9 (particularly shoulder 8) and segment 1 than is present between elbow 3 and gland 11, or in the area defined by spigot 10, lower surface 13, and elbow 3. Upon compression of gasket 2 by assembly of gland 11 to bell 12, elbow 3 is driven axially inwardly toward bell 12.

3. Paragraph at Page 15, Line 26:

- i. **Delete** the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 26 of the application, which as filed begins with the words “Yet another embodiment practices segment 1...”
- ii. **Replace** the paragraph with the following:

Yet another embodiment practices segment 1 as contacting bell 12 and gland 11 near the intersection of gasket recess seat 43 and gland 11. To effect such a close proximity, curve 70 (or elbow 3 and upper protrusion 17) will define a relatively small area that may be termed a back portion 100. Furthermore, the segment 1 may be constructed and positioned in such a manner that this [area] back portion 100 intrudes within any gap that is present at the intersection of gasket recess seat 43 and gland 11 as shown in Figure 7. The configuration of this area and the manner of intrusion may be orchestrated such that the end of lip 71 of gland 11 acts as a fulcrum, and the intruding portion acts against gasket recess seat 43 to prevent over-rotation of segment 1.